

CIA's LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

I. Introduction

A. Began seven years ago this February. Reason: gradual losses of fluent speakers from World War II and Korean War. Program has top priority in the Agency. Six goals: (1) Language-identified positions; (2) tested skills only as basis for actions; (3) cash-incentives for hard-to-learn or esoteric languages; (4) responsibilities delineated in headquarters and field regulatory issuances; (5) centralized monitoring by the Language Development Committee; and (6) a comprehensive annual report must be submitted to the Director at the end of each fiscal year.

II. Training

25X9 A. The Agency's Language School in the Office of Training is the principal resource for language study. Its total personnel complement is [REDACTED] are native speakers under contract.

In FY 72 - 23 languages taught; 690 students in formal classes, including 130 in the Before-and-After-Hours Program.

Plus 300 employees engaged in self-study and whom the Language School assists through its library-loan system. (5100 cassettes in 29 languages.) (Of special note is the fact that the Language School pioneered in the development and use of the cassette program that is now used throughout Government and industry.)

Plus 55 wives who attended classes on a space-available basis.

FY 72's budget was \$1,146,000. (FY 73, est., \$1,239,000; FY 74, asked for, \$1,327,000.)

25X1A The School uses a most productive total-immersion program, using [REDACTED]

25X1C [REDACTED]

Incentive as cash awards is an integral part of the program: 300 participants; 100 awards, languages selected by the Committee on an office-requirement basis.

1/29/73

III. The Outlook: Optimistic

1. In 1971 we lost 250 skills and added 240.
2. Expect to see the corner turned by 1977--or even earlier.
3. Taking steps to replace the old World War II native or fluent speaker--
(Melting pot has apparently melted--Universities do not produce competent linguist--unless they are language majors.)
 - a. Career Trainees bringing skills--in January 73 Class, 26 of 28 had a language skill. (No one except a Black accepted in CTP without above average aptitude.)
 - b. Overseas recruitment of young Americans with exceptional skill.
 - c. Special program--of total immersion for speakers who show promise of being able to become close to fluent or native.

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THE CIA's LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

I. The Program

CIA began its existence twenty-five years ago with a sizable roster of officers with native or fluent capability in one or more of many foreign languages. These were the officers from OSS and those who later came at the time of the Korean War. CIA has also had its own language school since 1951. But less than a decade ago it became apparent that many of our officers with the highest language skills would be retiring in the seventies, and so we embarked on a new program to fill the void when they would leave us. We established the Agency's Language Development Program and this year, FY 73, it is in full operation. According to the GAO study, not many Agencies appear to have very good foreign language programs. We think ours is better than many, but we are still not satisfied.

Our program is structured around six basic elements:

- Goals are set in terms of positions that will be filled by officers with specific levels of foreign language competencies,
- Actions with respect to recruiting, training, and assignments are based on Agency-tested language proficiencies and aptitudes,
- Monetary incentives are used to encourage employees to learn esoteric or the so-called neglected languages,
- Regulatory issuances spell out responsibilities of both the managers and the employees--both here and in the field,
- Monitoring the Program is centralized in the Agency's Language Development Committee, and,
- Accountability is built into the Committee's Annual Report to the Director.

II. The Operation

A. Training

The number of Agency employees studying languages here and overseas is higher than ever before. At any one time we have about 1600 in some form of study; in full-time, intensive classes; part-time during a work-day; before and after working hours, and in their own self-study programs. Both at headquarters and in the field. Most of it is under the sponsorship of the Language School in the Office of Training; some of it is at other Government installations—

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husbands going overseas for us—and those wives already overseas with their husbands.

1. Internal

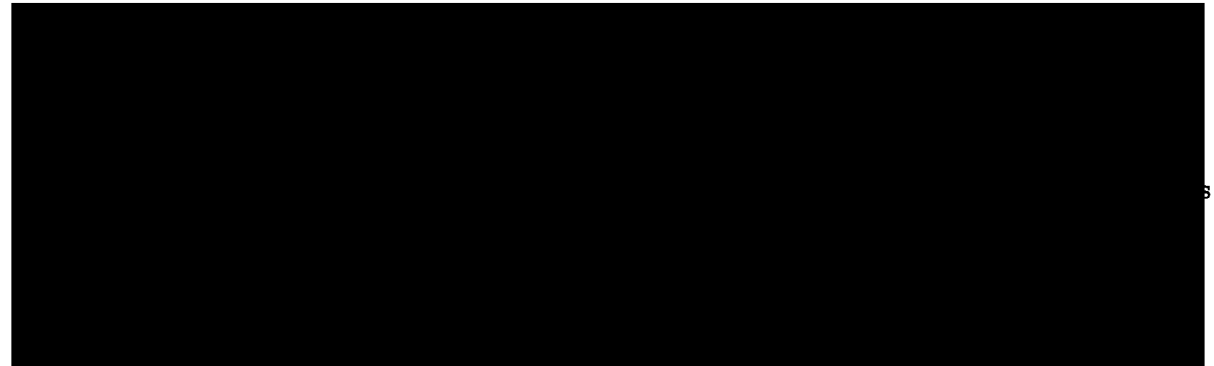
The Language School has an excellent staff of native speakers, on contract, providing us with a capability in as many as 25 languages. The School is a well-equipped facility, uses the most modern techniques—(it pioneered in the use of cassettes and now has over 7,000 in thirty-one languages available on loan to employees)—makes many of its own tapes, teaches through small classes and

self-study programs. It averages 800 students a year. Its budget for FY 72 was \$1,146,000. In FY 73 we expect about an 8% increase; and in FY 74, \$1,327,000, or another 6%.

2. External

Normally, CIA's employees use the facilities at the Language School. For reasons of economy or security, some of our people have to be trained outside the Agency. In such cases, the Language Committee requires consideration of other Government facilities first, then commercial schools. In the most recent fiscal year about 50 employees learned languages outside CIA, 16 of them

25X1C



B. Incentives

Our operations officers, for example, can earn cash awards for achievement in one or more of about twenty-five languages. The award is not a bonus for having a language skill; it comes after effort—and only once for a certain level of attainment. The selected languages are mainly those in short supply—and the list may change with the Committee's annual review.

About 300 employees are currently approved for the awards program—the heaviest enrollment being in Lao. And as of 31 December 72, 100 employees have been granted awards, one-fourth of these for achievement in Lao, and another fourth for Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Thai.

C. Resources

The Agency has computerized its records of individual language proficiencies. Since 1970 we have added a Language Control Register which details the positions requiring particular levels of skill and the skills of the current incumbents. In bringing about such a Control Register, we have processed 11,000 claims of Agency employees, their disclaimers—if they wished to disclaim—and tested scores, with the result that we now know, for example, that we have an inventory of 4,000 usable speaking skills. We know that 16% of our employees in Grades GS-09 through GS-18 have a speaking skill at an intermediate level or higher; and that of all operations officers in these grades, 36% are so qualified.

It may be of interest to mention where we stand in Chinese. We have 178 speakers with a useful skill; 94 are in the field. Further, of these same 178, 92 are assigned to the Far East Division, with 62 of them overseas for the Division.

III. The Problem and A Way to Solve It

The Agency is losing more skills at the fluent levels than it is gaining. Our academic institutions are not producing speakers with comparable skills and there is no longer America's "melting pot" from whence came our better bilingualists. We are gaining in numbers of employees with speaking skills, through recruitment, and training, but not at these highly desired levels.

We have stepped up our effort to counter this loss. The effort is three fold:

- Recruiting young Americans who have lived abroad and already have a native or fluent level proficiency in a language,
- Recruiting young men and women with a useful level of skill and giving them intensive training, including total immersion,

(Here it is well to note that in the Agency's Career Training Class of January 73, of the 28, 26 have some skill in one of 14 languages.), and,

- Recruiting the individual who may have no proficiency but who has an Agency-tested aptitude to learn foreign languages.

IV. Summary

We find ourselves in much agreement with the recommendations cited in the GAO study. But, as stated earlier, we are not satisfied with our successes to date. We look to 1977 for the Language Development Program to stabilize.

Training

Internal

FY 72

Language School

23 - Languages
558 - Students

Before-and-After Hours Program

4 - Languages
129 - Students

Dependents (on a space-available basis)

2 - Languages
53 - Spouses

CS Maintenance Program

45 - Officers
2 - Classes--off-duty

Self-study

200 - Employees
5100 - Tapes, cassettes, texts involving 29 languages,
loaned to employees by the Language School

Contract Employees

73 - (Native speakers)

External



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FY 72

Washington - 37 employees)
Overseas - 16 employees) 53 -- Cost: \$138,889

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Others



-- 700 No cost figures
available

FY 73

Washington - 35 employees)

Overseas - 7 employees)

42--Cost \$181,075
(with \$5,000 projected for
FY 73 for local language
training)

Others - No information available

FY 74

For both Washington and Overseas the projected cost is
\$194,000 -- or a 5% increase.

Incentives (As of 31 December 1972)

Languages Approved for Achievement Awards

Amharic	Hindi	*Russian
*Arabic	Hungarian	Serbo-Croatian
Bulgarian	Italian	*Spanish
*Burmese	*Japanese	*Swahili
Cambodian	Kachin	*Thai/Shan
Chinese	Korean	Tagalog
Czech	*Lao	*Turkish
Finnish	*Persian	Urdu
*French	*Polish	*Vietnamese
*German	*Portuguese	
Haitian - Creole	Romanian	

*(Indicates languages in which awards have been granted.)

300 - participants (designated)

100 - awards

25 in Lao

25% in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Thai

\$77,000 awarded

Resources

18% - GS 18's have Intermediate competence or better in one or
more languages (10% have two or more)

23% - GS 17's have competence in one or more languages
(8% have two or more)

21% - GS 16's have competence in one or more languages
(5% have two or more)

The Problem and A Way to Solve It

Losses Through Attrition (At the Native and High Levels)

Albanian	Polish
Czech	Slovak
Greek	Ukranian
Hungarian	
Lithuanian	
Norwegian	

Gains Through Recruitment and Training (At the Intermediate Level and Below)

Arabic	Portuguese
Danish	Romanian
Finnish	Russian
Hindi	Spanish
Indonesian	Swedish
Lao	Thai
Latvian	Turkish
Persian	Vietnamese

Career Trainees

Class of January 1973 (28 CTs)

25 - Average or better aptitude

Speaking Competencies

14 - Languages

2 - Native (Italian - Russian)

4 - High (German, French, Spanish)

12 - Intermediate (French, German, Lao, Spanish, Thai, Cambodian, Russian, Portuguese)

8 - Elementary (Arabic, French, German, Russian, Spanish)

6 - Slight (Chinese, French, Japanese, Russian)

The GAO Study (For Information)

Findings:

1. In 1970
 - 60 federal activities spent about 18 million
 - 18 million dollars spent
 - 20,000 persons trained
 - 150 languages
 - 400 locations (U. S. and Overseas)
 - 3.7 million spent in foreign language research programs
2. Little real progress toward raising foreign language competence of foreign service personnel in language-essential positions
3. Substantially greater emphasis on identifying and quantifying the needs and providing language training
4. Factors contributing to the inadequacy of language capabilities
 - Lack of criteria for identifying foreign language requirements
 - Lack of emphasis on utilization of language-proficient staff
 - Inadequate proficiency testing
 - Language training programs at posts (State) generally ineffective
 - FSI's Schools overseas generally effective

Recommendations:

1. Need for coordination among federal agencies.
 - Secretary of State should more closely restrict enrollment in advanced language training to students demonstrating requisite aptitude
 - Secretary take leadership in establishing interagency committee whereby language training resources can be used to maximum extent.
2. Congress should attend to
 - Reaffirming importance of foreign language competence
 - establishing relative levels of progress, and
 - requiring progress reports on accomplishments.

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